



Education Watch

Enhancing Flexibility & Accountability ■ Leaving No Child Behind

U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee ■ John Boehner, Chairman
2181 Rayburn House Office Building ■ (202) 225-4527

<http://edworkforce.house.gov/edwatch>

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Study Shows Achievement Gaps Remains Through High School

Yesterday, the College Board released new figures drawn from the 2001 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) that show a continuing achievement gap between white students and their minority peers. The results echo reading and math scores from the 2000 NAEP that also reveal a persistent achievement gap between white students and African American and Hispanic students during their elementary school years. The data released by the College Board confirms that the gap lasts through their high school years.

While SAT averages rose for almost all racial ethnic groups between 1991 and 2001, there remains a wide achievement gap. Average verbal scores for whites increased from 518 to 529 over the last 10 years.

Improvements for African Americans were more modest -- they increased from 427 to 433, still a 96-point gap. Average Mexican American verbal scores fell, from 454 to 451. On math, average scores for whites in 2001 were 531, 105 points more than African Americans, 73 more than Hispanics, and 80 points more than Puerto Ricans.

Education Secretary Rod Paige addressed the issue yesterday, saying the report "provides more evidence that our educational system is leaving too many children behind, especially poor and minority students ... I'm heartened to see that more minority students are taking the SAT and setting their sights on college, but the achievement gap between white and minority students who took the SAT is both large and persistent. That kind of data cannot and must not be ignored."

Message of the Day

The most recent SAT and NAEP results demonstrate that President Bush's plan to close the achievement gap is the right approach to education reform.

- ❑ *States with rigorous testing and accountability systems, like those in the Bush plan, are making the most progress.*
- ❑ *The importance of measuring progress among children of all backgrounds and holding schools accountable for results can't be underestimated.*
- ❑ *The achievement gap between children of different racial and ethnic groups remains intolerably high; President Bush's reform plan offers hope to our nation's disadvantaged students.*

DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- The NAEP math scores released earlier this year show that the gap between white and African-American students was 31 points among fourth-graders, 39 points in eighth grade, and 34 points in 12th grade.
- The NAEP math scores also showed that between white and Hispanic students, the achievement gap was 24 points in 4th grade, 22 points in eighth grade, and 26 points among 12th-graders.
- In fourth-grade math, every racial/ethnic group in Texas performed better than their racial/ethnic peers in other states.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"This year's SAT data reveals yet again that we need to target federal resources to programs that work. President Bush's education plan emphasizes reform, not just money. As the conference puts the finishing touches on the President's education bill, our number one priority should be to target additional funding to students who need it the most and close this persistent achievement gap." EW Committee Chairman John Boehner, August 28, 2001